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Mr. McGeorge Bundy
The White House

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EO 12958 3.4(b)(1)>25Yrs
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SC No. 04209/65

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
31 March 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Possible PAVN Tactical
Command Headquarters in South Vietnam

1. Hanoi may be moving to step up military pressure in the northern part of South Vietnam, the area designated by the North Vietnamese as Military Region V (MR V). [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] a possible tactical command headquarters (termed by the North Vietnamese a "battlefront" headquarters) of a type known to have directed other military operations has been established in Thua Thien Province. It may be staffed by regular North Vietnamese military personnel from the 325th Division. The Viet Cong are strong in this area and large-scale attacks involving several VC regiments against major population centers, particularly those where US military forces are located, are possible.

2. The Vietnamese term "battlefront" is a designation applied to a headquarters which is established to direct a specific campaign or operation. "Battlefront" headquarters were widely used in the French-Indochina War period and have been noted more recently in Laos. In January 1964, a "battlefront" headquarters was established in Laos; [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] this was called the Lak Sao headquarters and was directing operations in a campaign along Route 8. This operation apparently terminated in February 1964 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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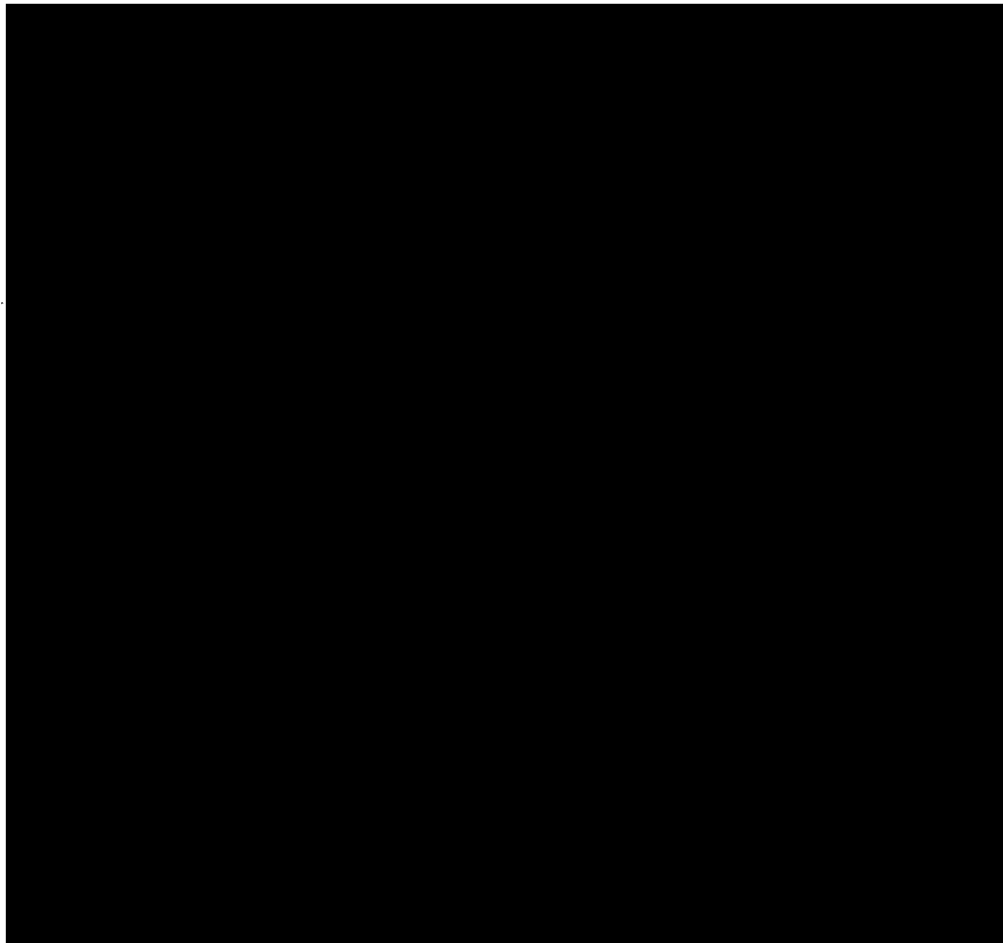
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5. The establishment of a tactical command headquarters in South Vietnam could presage a higher level of coordinated military activity in the area in which it is located (MR V). MACV's latest available order of battle shows that since January 1964 confirmed Viet Cong main force strength in MR V has almost doubled--from about 7,700 to about 14,300. These troops are organized into 3 regiments and 19 separate battalions, as well as other smaller units. It is also possible that regular PAVN units subordinate to the 325th Division could be employed in operations in MR V, but there is no firm evidence that tactical units of the 325th have moved from the Dong Hoi area. (Map)

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